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# Jane Cable

... By ...  
**GEORGE BARR McCUTCHEON,**  
Author of "Beverly of Graustark," Etc.

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(Continued.)  
"Then I may have her?" he cried.  
She looked up at her husband, and he  
nodded his head.

"Our little girl," he murmured. It  
all came back to her like a flash. Her  
deception, her imposition, her years of  
stealth—and she shuddered. Her hand  
trembled, and her eyes grew wide with  
repugnance as they turned again upon  
Graydon Bansemmer. Both men drew  
back in amazement.

"Oh, no," "cannot, cannot be!" she  
moaned, without taking her eyes from  
Graydon's face. In the same instant  
she recovered herself and craved his  
pardon. "I am distressed—it is so hard  
to give her up, Graydon," she panted,  
smiling again. The thought had come  
suddenly to her that James Bansemmer  
had a very strong purpose in letting  
his son marry Jane Cable. She never  
ceased to believe that Bansemmer  
knew the parents of the child she had  
adopted. It had dawned upon her in  
the flash of that moment that the mar-  
riage might mean a great deal to this  
calculating father. "David, won't you  
leave us for a few minutes? There is  
something I want to say to Graydon."

David Cable hesitated for an instant  
and then slowly left the room, closing  
the door behind him. He was strange-  
ly puzzled over that momentary ex-  
position of emotion on the part of his wife.  
He was a man of the world, and he  
knew its ways from the days up, but  
it was many days before the startling  
suspicion struck in to explain her un-  
called-for display of feeling. It did not  
strike in until after he noticed that  
James Bansemmer was paying marked  
attention to his wife.

Left alone with Graydon, Mrs. Cable  
nervously hurried to the point. She  
was determined to satisfy herself that  
the son did not share her secret with  
his father.

"Does your father know that you  
want to marry Jane?" she asked.  
"Of course—er—I mean he suspects,"  
Mrs. Cable. He has teased me not a  
little, you know. I'm going to tell him  
tonight."

"He has not known Jane very long,  
you know."

"Long enough to admire her above  
all others. He has often told me that  
she is the finest girl he's ever met. Oh  
I'm sure father will be pleased, Mrs.  
Cable."

"I met your father in New York, of  
course—years ago. I presume he has  
told you."

"I think not. Oh, yes; I believe he  
did tell me after we met you at Hoo-  
ley's that night. He had never seen  
Mr. Cable."

"Nor Jane, I dare say."

"Oh, no! I knew Jane long before  
dad ever laid eyes on her." The look  
in his eyes satisfied her over all that  
he knew nothing more.

"You love her enough to sacrifice  
anything on earth for her?" she asked  
suddenly.

"Yes, Mrs. Cable," he answered sim-  
ply.

"You would renounce all else in the  
world for her sake?"

"I believe that's part of the service,"  
he said, with a smile. "Jane is worth  
all of that and more. She shall be first  
in my heart, in my mind, for all time,  
if that is what you mean, Mrs. Cable.  
Believe me, I mean that."

"Mr. Bansemmer says that you are like  
your mother," she mused wistfully.

"That's why he loves me, he also  
says. I'm sorry I'm not like father,"  
he said earnestly. "He's great!" She  
turned her face away so that he might  
not see the look in her eyes. "I think  
Jane is like"—He paused in confu-  
sion. "Like her father," he conclud-  
ed. She arose abruptly and took his  
hand in hers.

"Go to her, Graydon," she said. "Tell  
her that Mr. Cable and I want you to  
be our son. Good night and God bless  
you." She preceded him to the stair-  
way and again shook hands with him.  
David Cable was ascending.

"Graydon," said the latter, pausing  
halfway up as the other came down,  
"you were ready to congratulate me in  
advance on the prospect of becoming  
president of the P. L. and A. Do you  
know that I was once an ordinary fire-  
man?"

"Certainly, Mr. Cable. The rise of  
David Cable is known to every one."

"That's all. I just wanted to be sure.  
Jane was not born with a silver spoon,  
you know."

"And yet she is Jane Cable," said the  
young man proudly. Then he hurried  
on down to the expectant, throbbing  
Jane.

Frances Cable sat at her escritoire  
for an hour, her brain working with  
feverish energy. She was seeking out  
the right step to take in advance of  
James Bansemmer. Her husband sat  
alone in his den and smoked long after  
she had taken her step and retired to  
rest, but not to sleep. On her desk lay  
half a dozen invitations, two of them  
from the exclusive set to whose inner  
circles her ambitious, vigorous aspira-  
tions were forcing her. She pushed  
them aside and with narrowed eyes  
wrote to James Bansemmer—wrote the  
note of the diplomat who seeks to fore-  
stall:

Dear Mr. Bansemmer—Doubtless Graydon  
will have told you his good news before  
this reaches you, but Mr. Cable and I feel  
that we cannot permit the hour to pass  
without assuring you of our own happi-  
ness and of our complete approval. With  
you dine with us this evening—on family  
—at seven-thirty. FRANCES CABLE.

David Cable read the note and sent it  
early the next morning by special mes-  
senger to James Bansemmer. The en-  
gagement of Jane Cable and Graydon  
Bansemmer was announced in the even-  
ing papers.

**CHAPTER X.**

THE offices of James Bansemmer  
were two floors above those of Robert-  
son Ray Rigby in the U—  
building. The morning  
after Graydon Banse-

mer's important visit to the home of  
the Cables, Eddie Deever lounged into  
Rigby's presence. He seemed relieved  
to find that the stenographer was ill  
and would not be down that day. The  
lanky youngster studiously inspected  
the array of law books in the cases for  
some time, occasionally casting a sly  
glance at Bobby. At last he ventured  
a remark somewhat out of the ordi-  
nary—for him:

"That old man up in Bansemmer's of-  
fice gets on my nerves," said he, set-  
tling his long frame in a chair and  
breaking in upon Rigby's attention so  
suddenly that the lawyer was startled  
into a quick look of interest.

"Old Droom? What do you know  
about him?"

"Nothing in particular, of course.  
Only he sort of jars me when he talks."  
Rigby saw that the young man had  
something on his mind.

"I did not know that you were per-  
sonal friends," ventured Rigby.

"Friends!" snorted Eddie. "Holy  
mackerel! He scares the life out of  
me. I know him in a business way,  
that's all. He came down here three  
weeks ago and borrowed some books  
for Bansemmer. I had to go up and get  
'em yesterday. He told me to sit  
down while he looked up the books. I  
was there half an hour, and he talked  
all the time. By jing! He makes your  
blood run cold. He said he had set  
aside in his will the sum of a hundred  
dollars to build a church for the honest  
man. That will be a pretty small  
church," says I. 'It will be a small  
congregation, my son,' says he. 'What  
few real honest men we have will hes-

itate to attend for fear of being ostracized  
by society.' Gee whiz, Mr. Droom, that's  
pretty hard on society!" says I, laughing.  
"Oh, for that matter, I have already deliv-  
ered my eulogy on society," says he. "But  
it ain't dead, sure. It's so rotten it must  
surely be dead," says he in the nastiest  
way I ever heard. He's a fearful old  
man, Mr. Rigby. He made a mean re-  
mark about that Mrs. David Cable."

"What did he say?" quickly demand-  
ed Bobby.

"He said he'd been reading in the pa-  
pers about how she was breaking into  
society. I knew her in New York  
years ago," says he. "She wasn't fash-  
ionable then. Now she's so swell that  
she'll soon be asking Cable to build a  
mansion at Rose Lawn cemetery, be-  
cause all of the fashionables go there."

"Pretty raw, eh, Mr. Rigby?"

"Oh, he's an old blatherskite, Eddie!  
They talk that way when they get old  
and grouchy. So he knew Mrs. Cable  
in New York, eh? What else did he  
say about her?"

"Nothing much. Oh, yes, he did say  
—in that nasty way of his—that he saw  
her on the street the other day chat-  
ting with one of the richest swells in  
Chicago. He didn't say who he was  
except that he was the man who once  
made his wife sit up all night in the  
day coach while he slept in the only  
berth to be had on the train. Do you  
know who that could be?"

"I'm afraid Droom was romancing,"  
said Bobby, with a smile.

"Say, Mr. Rigby," said Eddie earnest-  
ly, "what sort of business does Mr.  
Bansemmer handle?" Rigby had diffi-  
culty in controlling his expression. "I  
was wondering, because while I was  
there yesterday a girl I know came out  
of one of the back rooms where she had  
been talking to Bansemmer. She's no good."

"Very likely she was consulting him  
about something," said Rigby quietly.

"She soaked a friend of mine for a  
thousand when she was singing in the  
chorus in one of the theaters here."

"Do you know her well?"

"I—er—did see something of her at  
one time. Say, don't mention it to  
Rosie, will you? She's not strong for  
chorus girls," said Eddie anxiously. "A  
few days ago I saw a woman come out  
of his office heavily veiled. She was  
crying, because I could hear the sobs.  
I don't go much on Bansemmer, Mr.  
Rigby. Darn him, he called me a pup  
one day when I took a message up for  
Judge Smith."

"See here, Eddie," said Rigby, lean-  
ing forward suddenly. "I've heard two  
or three queer things about Bansemmer.  
I want you to tell me all you hear from  
Droom and all that you see. Don't  
you think you could cultivate Droom's  
acquaintance a bit? Keep this very  
quiet—not a word to anybody. It may  
mean something in the end."

"Gee whiz!" murmured Eddie, his  
eyes wide with interest. From that  
day on he and Bobby Rigby were  
allies—even conspirators.

Later in the day Rigby had a tele-  
phone message from Graydon Banse-  
mer suggesting that they lunch to-  
gether. All he would say over the wire  
was that he would some day soon ex-  
pect Rigby to perform a happy service  
for him. Bobby understood and was  
troubled. He suspected that Graydon  
had asked Jane Cable to marry him  
and that she had consented. He loved  
Graydon Bansemmer, but for the first  
time in their acquaintance he found

himself wondering if the son were not  
playing into the father's hands in this  
most desirable matrimonial venture.  
With a shudder of repugnance he put  
the thought from him, loyal to that  
good friend and comrade.

James Bansemmer came into his office  
late that morning. He had not seen  
Graydon the night before, but at break-  
fast the young man announced his  
good fortune and asked for his bless-  
ing. To his son's surprise the elder  
man did not at once express his ap-  
proval. For a long time he sat silent  
and preoccupied to all appearance, nar-  
rowly studying his son's face until the  
young man was constrained to laugh  
in his nervousness.

"You love her, you are very sure?"  
asked the father at last.

"Better than my life," cried Graydon  
warmly.

"I should say so. Her father is a  
wonderful man."

"Yes, I dare say," agreed the other,  
without taking his eyes from the son's  
face.

"But you don't say whether you ap-  
prove or disapprove," complained Gray-  
don.

"Would it change matters if I dis-  
approved?"

"Not in the least, father. I love her.  
I'd hate to displease you in—"

"Then, of course, I approve," said  
the other, with his warmest smile.  
"Jane is a beauty, and—I am proud of her."

"She is too good for me," lamented  
Graydon happily.

"I can't very well contradict her fu-  
ture husband," said the lawyer. There  
was a hungry look in his eyes as he  
glanced from time to time at the face  
of the boy who had his mother's un-  
forgettable eyes.

A messenger brought Mrs. Cable's  
note to Bansemmer soon after his ar-  
rival at the office. He and Elias  
Droom were in the back office when  
the boy came. They had been dis-  
cussing the contents of a letter that  
came in the early mail. The lawyer  
accepted the note and dismissed the  
boy with the curt remark that he  
would telephone an answer in person.

"It looks to me as though this is go-  
ing to be a rather ticklish affair,"  
Droom resumed after the boy had  
closed the outer door behind him.  
Bansemmer's mind was on Mrs. Cable's  
note. A queer smile hung on his lips.

"I'm rather touched by her astute-  
ness," he said. "She's cleverer than I  
thought. Oh," suddenly remembering  
that it was not Mrs. Cable's letter they  
were discussing, "you always see the  
dearly side of things, Elias."

"I haven't forgotten New York," said  
the clerk dryly.

"Ah, but Chicago isn't New York,  
you know."

"Well, I was just reminding you.  
This man is going to fight back, that  
is plain."

"That's what Mrs. Norwood prom-  
ised to do also, Elias. But she was  
like a lamb in the end."

"I wouldn't be very proud of that af-  
fair if I were you."

"See here, Droom, you're getting a  
trifle too familiar of late. I don't like  
it," said Bansemmer sharply.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Bansemmer,"  
said Droom, scraping his foot across the  
floor and looking straight past his mas-  
ter's head. "It's for the good of the  
cause, that's all. It wouldn't do on  
Graydon's account for you to be driven  
from Chicago at this time. You see, he  
thinks you are beyond reproach."

"Curse your impudence, Droom! I  
won't be spoken to in that way," ex-  
claimed Bansemmer, white with sudden  
rage and loathing.

"Am I to expect my discharge, sir?"  
asked Droom, rubbing his hands ab-  
jectly, but looking squarely into Banse-  
mer's eyes for the first time in their  
acquaintance. Bansemmer glared back  
for an instant and then shrugged his  
shoulders, with a nervous laugh.

"We shan't quarrel, Elias," he said.  
"Speaking of Graydon, he is to be mar-  
ried before long."

"I trust he is to do well, sir. Gray-  
don is a fine boy."

"He is to marry David Cable's daugh-  
ter."

"Indeed! I did not know that David  
Cable had a daughter."

"You know whom I mean—Jane Ca-  
ble." He turned rather restlessly, con-  
scious that Droom's eyes were follow-  
ing him to the window. He glanced  
again at Mrs. Cable's note and waited.

"I suppose you are pleased," said  
Droom after a long pause.

"Certainly! Jane is a splendid girl.  
She's beautiful, accomplished and—  
well, she's thoroughbred," said Banse-  
mer steadily, turning to face the old  
man.

"It is not necessary to remind you  
that her parents are unknown," said  
Droom.

"Still," said Bansemmer, and he sat  
down and leaned forward eagerly, "she  
has good blood on both sides."

"Yes, she is called best."

"You speak as if you know the  
truth."

"I think—yes, I'm sure I know. I  
have known for twenty years, Mr.  
Bansemmer. I had the same means as  
you of finding out whose child she  
was."

"That's more than Mrs. Cable knows,"  
said Droom. "She did not take the trouble to in-  
vestigate. It's too late now."

"I don't believe you really know the  
names of her father and mother," said  
Bansemmer shrewdly. "You are trying  
to trick me into telling you what I do  
know."

"There are portraits of her ancestors  
hanging in Fifth avenue," said Droom  
promptly. "Here," and he picked up a  
pencil, "I'll write the initials of her  
parents. You do the same, and we'll  
see that they tally." He quickly  
scratched four letters on a pad of pa-  
per. Bansemmer hesitated and then  
slowly wrote the initials on the back  
of an envelope. Without a word they  
exchanged the papers. After a moment  
they both smiled in relief. Neither had  
been tricked. The initials were identi-  
cal.

"I imagine the ancestors hanging in  
Fifth avenue would be amazed if they  
knew the story of Jane," said Droom,  
with a chuckle.

"I doubt it, Droom. Ancestors have  
stories, too, and they hide them."

"By the way, now that your son is to  
marry her, I'd like to know just what  
your game is."

Bansemmer turned on him like a tiger,  
his steely eyes blazing.

(To be continued.)



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